

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-35. (canceled)

36. (currently amended) A heart valve assembly, comprising:

a base member comprising a generally annular shaped body and a flexible cuff extending around a periphery of the annular shaped body;

a valve member separate from the base member and comprising an annular frame having a multi-lobular shape; [[and]]

one or more elongate guide members extending upwardly beyond and away from the base member and receivable through the valve member such that the valve member is slidable along the one or more guide members to align the valve member with the base member as the valve member is directed towards the base member; and

cooperating connectors for securing the valve member adjacent the base member, the cooperating connectors comprising one or more elements on each of the one or more guide members for engaging the valve member to allow the valve member to be directed towards the base member but preventing the valve member from being directed away from the base member.

37. (previously amended) The assembly of claim 36, wherein the valve member comprises a plurality of leaflets extending from the frame.

38. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 36, wherein the flexible cuff extends radially from the annular shaped body.

39. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 36, wherein the base member defines a plane and a longitudinal axis substantially orthogonal to the plane, the base member comprising a multi-lobular annular shape within the plane, and wherein the multi-lobular shape of the valve member is complementary to the multi-lobular shape of the base member.

40. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 39, further comprising one or more additional guides on at least one of the base member and the annular body for aligning the multi-lobular shapes with one another about the longitudinal axis.

41. (canceled)

42. (currently amended) A heart valve [[The]] assembly of claim 41, comprising:
a base member comprising a generally annular shaped body and a flexible cuff extending around a periphery of the annular shaped body;
a valve member separate from the base member and comprising an annular frame having a multi-lobular shape;
one or more elongate guide members extending upwardly beyond and away from the base member and receivable through the valve member such that the valve member is slidable along the

one or more guide members to align the valve member with the base member as the valve member is directed towards the base member; and

cooperating connectors for securing the valve member adjacent the base member,

wherein the cooperating connectors comprise one or more ratcheting elements on each of the one or more guide members, thereby providing at least one of a tactile indication and an audible indication as the valve member is directed towards the base member.

43. (canceled)

44. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 36, wherein the valve member comprises one or more guide channels for receiving a respective one of the one or more guide members therethrough.

45. (previously presented and withdrawn) The assembly of claim 44, wherein each guide channel comprises a piece of material attached to the valve member.

46. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 44, wherein each guide channel comprises a recess in the valve member.

47. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 46, wherein each guide channel further comprises a cover extending across at least a portion of the recess.

48. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 36, wherein the one or more guide members comprise a rectangular cross-section.

49. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 36, wherein the one or more guide members are detachable from the base member.

50. (currently amended) A heart valve [[The]] assembly of claim 36, comprising:
a base member comprising a generally annular shaped body and a flexible cuff extending around a periphery of the annular shaped body;
a valve member separate from the base member and comprising an annular frame having a multi-lobular shape; and
one or more elongate guide members extending upwardly beyond and away from the base member and receivable through the valve member such that the valve member is slidable along the one or more guide members to align the valve member with the base member as the valve member is directed towards the base member,

each of the one or more guide members comprising one or more elements spaced a predetermined distance apart from the base member, each element comprising sloping proximal surfaces and blunt distal surfaces, allowing the valve member to be directed down the guide members until disposed the predetermined distance from the base member, but preventing the valve member from subsequently being directed away from the base member.

51. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 50, wherein the one or more elements comprise one or more detents.

52. (currently amended) A heart valve assembly, comprising:

a base member comprising a generally annular shaped body, the base member comprising an annular ring and a flexible cuff extending around a periphery of the annular ring;

a valve member separate from the base member and comprising a multi-lobular shape;

a plurality of elongate guide members spaced apart around a periphery of the base member and extending upwardly beyond and away from the base member, the elongate guide members having a length such that the elongate guide members extend from a biological annulus when the base member is introduced into the biological annulus;

a plurality of guide channels in the valve member for receiving respective guide members therethrough such that the valve member is slidable along the guide members from outside the biological annulus to align the valve member with the base member as the valve member is directed into the biological annulus towards the base member; and

cooperating connectors for securing the valve member adjacent the base member, the cooperating connectors comprising one or more elements on each of the guide members for engaging the guide channels to allow the valve member to be directed towards the base member but preventing the valve member from being directed away from the base member.

53. (previously amended) The assembly of claim 52, wherein the cooperating connectors comprise the guide channels on the valve member and connectors on the guide

members for engaging the guide channels for securing the valve member adjacent the base member.

54. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 52, wherein the base member comprises a multi-lobular shape, and wherein the guide members extend from respective lobes of the base member.

55. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 52, the guide members being detachable from the base member.

56. (currently amended) A heart valve [[The]] assembly of claim 52, comprising:
a base member comprising a generally annular shaped body, the base member comprising an annular ring and a flexible cuff extending around a periphery of the annular ring;
a valve member separate from the base member and comprising a multi-lobular shape;
a plurality of elongate guide members spaced apart around a periphery of the base member and extending upwardly beyond and away from the base member, the elongate guide members having a length such that the elongate guide members extend from a biological annulus when the base member is introduced into the biological annulus;
a plurality of guide channels in the valve member for receiving respective guide members therethrough such that the valve member is slidable along the guide members from outside the biological annulus to align the valve member with the base member as the valve member is directed into the biological annulus towards the base member; and

cooperating connectors for securing the valve member adjacent the base member,

wherein the cooperating connectors comprise one or more ratcheting elements on each of the guide members, thereby providing at least one of a tactile indication and an audible indication as the valve member is directed towards the base member.

57. (canceled)

58. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 52, further comprising one or more additional guides on at least one of the base member and the valve member for aligning the valve member with the base member about the longitudinal axis before the elongate guide members are introduced through the guide channels.

59. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 58, wherein the one or more additional guides comprise visual markers on at least one of the base member and the valve member.